

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07
FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 EPG-02 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00
LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 SS-15 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
L-03 H-01 /076 W
-----077106 241659Z /43

R 241630Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4721
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, FR
SUBJECT: THE UNIONS OF THE LEFT PRESENT THEIR PROGRAMS

REF: PARIS 16456

1. SUMMARY: THE CFDT AND CGT HAVE PUBLISHED SEPARATE PROGRAMS WHICH SHOW THAT ALTHOUGH BOTH UNIONS SHARE CERTAIN IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES, THEIR LONG TERM GOALS ARE FAR APART. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TWO PROGRAMS LIES NOT ONLY IN GIVING THE TWO UNIONS' PHILOSOPHICAL DIFFERENCES A SOLID DIMENSION, BUT THAT THEY ARE WHAT WILL BE DEMANDED OF ANY FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF THE LEFT. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ALLIED SOCIALIST-ORIENTED CFDT AND COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED CGT HAVE RECENTLY PUBLISHED SEPARATE PROGRAMS, WHICH INCLUDE ANALYSES OF THE SITUATION IN FRANCE AND CONCRETE PROPOSALS FOR LEGISLATED ECONOMIC
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AND SOCIAL CHANGE. A REVIEW OF THESE BULKY DOCUMENTS SHOWS A NUMBER OF SHARED GOALS, INCLUDING:
(A) RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE (SMIC) TO FF2200 (\$440) PER MONTH FOR A 40-HOUR WEEK;
(B) INDEXING OF WAGES;

(C) REDUCTION OF SALARY DIFFERENTIALS;

(D) CREATION OF A NATIONAL WAGE GRID;

(E) REDUCTION OF THE RETIREMENT AGE TO 60;

(F) ESTABLISHING A FIFTH WEEK OF PAID VACATION;

(G) GRANTING EQUAL RIGHTS TO ALL FOREIGN WORKERS.

3. BEYOND THESE JOINT OBJECTIVES (WHICH IN SOME CASES DIFFER SLIGHTLY IN DETAIL), THE PROPOSALS REFLECT THE WELL-KNOWN PHILOSOPHICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO UNIONS, PARTICULARLY AS THEY RELATE TO HOW THE WORKERS ARE TO BE REPRESENTED IN INDUSTRY.

4. BRIEFLY, THE CFDT DEMANDS WOULD INVOLVE THE EXTENSION AND STRENGTHENING OF THE PRINCIPLE OF ELECTED WORKER COMMITTEES WITHIN EACH ENTERPRISE. IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE POWERS OF THE COMITES D'ENTREPRISE WOULD BE EXPANDED, NOTABLY BY BEING GIVEN THE RIGHT TO VETO LAY-OFFS. FOR THE EXISTING AND PROSPECTIVE NATIONALIZED INDUSTRIES, THERE IS AN ELABORATE PROPOSAL FOR A SYSTEM OF WORKER ELECTED COUNCILS AT LOCAL, PLANT AND NATIONAL LEVELS OF ACTIVITY. THE CFDT PROPOSALS, THUS, LAY GREAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STRESS ON THE DECENTRALIZATION AND DEMOCRATIZATION OF AUTHORITY, ONE OF THE UNION'S MAIN GOALS.

5. IN CONTRAST, THE CGT'S DEMANDS ARE FOCUSED ON DETAILED PROPOSALS FOR EXTENDING THE LEGAL POSITION AND POWERS OF THE UNIONS, AS SUCH; IN INCREASING THE SCOPE OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL, AND IN STATUTORILY CURTAILING THE GOVERNMENT'S AND EMPLOYERS' POWERS IN LABOR DISPUTES. IN CONNECTION WITH THE NATIONALIZED INDUSTRIES, THE CGT DOCUMENT STATES THAT IN ASSURING WORKER PARTICIPATION AND CONTROL: "...THE ROLE OF THE TRADE UNIONS WILL BE DECISIVE FROM ALL POINTS OF VIEW." THE CGT PROPOSALS, THUS, LARGELY AMOUNT TO A PROGRAM FOR INCREASING ITS POWER BASE IN THE ECONOMY. A DETAILED REPORT ON THESE AND THE OTHER PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN BOTH PROGRAMS WILL BE SUBMITTED IN AIRGRAM FORM.

6. IN THE PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS WHICH HAVE FOLLOWED THE APPEARANCE OF THESE DOCUMENTS ATTENTION HAS BEEN FOCUSED ON THEIR SIMILARITIES, AS WELL AS ON THE UNIONS' POSITIONS THAT THEY AND THEIR PROGRAMS

ARE INDEPENDENT OF THE COMMON PROGRAM OF THE LEFT.

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INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, THE CGT HAS AVOIDED CRITICIZING ITS ALLY'S PROPOSALS, BUT THE CFDT HAS BEEN RATHER LESS DIPLOMATIC. IN A PUBLIC STATEMENT, CFDT LEADER MAIRE HAS SAID THAT HE LOOKS TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY TO BE THE ONE TO FIRST ACCEPT THE PRINCIPLE OF DECENTRALIZATION EMBODIED IN AUTOGESTION; AND THAT THEN, AND ONLY THEN, WOULD THE CGT GO ALONG WITH IT. IT IS NOT CLEAR, AT THIS POINT, WHETHER MAIRE SERIOUSLY EXPECTS THE CPF TO ACCEPT HIS IDEA OF WORKERS COUNCILS (WHICH MIGHT WELL BE ACCEPTABLE TO IT AND THE CGT FOR REASONS WHICH HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH AUTOGESTION), OR IF HE WAS MERELY REMINDING EVERYONE WHOSE DOG THE CGT IS.

7. IN ANY EVENT, THE CRYSTALIZATION IN PROGRAM FORM OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO UNIONS IS NOT LIKELY TO LEAD TO ANY EARLY DISSOLUTION OF THEIR
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ALLIANCE. THE CFDT'S ALLEGED PLAN TO DROP THE CGT IN FAVOR OF AN UNDERSTANDING WITH THE FO AND CGC (SEE REFTTEL) IS BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE LEFT WILL COME TO POWER, AND WOULD CERTAINLY NOT TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE ELECTIONS. IN THE MEANTIME, MAIRE IS TAKING NO CHANCES AND HAS AGAIN PUBLICALLY DECLARED THAT HE HAS NO INTEREST IN AN ALLIANCE WITH FO, AND THAT THE UNITY OF ACTION BETWEEN THE CGT AND CFDT IS IRREVERSABLE. (IN THIS, FUTURE EVENTS MAY PROVE HIM MORE RIGHT THAN HE KNOWS.)

8. MORE IMPORTANT STILL, IS THE FACT THAT THESE PROGRAMS WERE DEVELOPED BY THE TWO UNIONS IN ANTICIPATION OF THE LEFT COMING TO POWER. NEITHER THE CFDT NOR THE CGT FEEL BOUND TO LIMIT THEMSELVES TO THE COMMON PROGRAM OR ANYTHING ELSE THAT THE POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE LEFT AGREE UPON (THE CGT HAS ALWAYS MAINTAINED THE FICTION OF POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE, AND THE CFDT DOES OPERATE ON ITS OWN). THUS, SHOULD THE LEFT TAKE OVER, THE TWO UNIONS WILL HAVE NO HESITATION IN PRESENTING THEIR POLITICAL VIEWS, AND PUSHING FOR THEIR PROPOSALS WITHOUT REGARD TO WHAT THE UPDATED COMMON PROGRAM MAY PROVIDE; AND THERE WILL BE PRESSURES FROM WITHIN THE LEFT TO GIVE IN AT LEAST ON SOME OF THE DEMANDS, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR FINANCIAL OR, IN THE CASE OF THE CGT'S OBJECTIVES, POLITICAL COSTS. ADDED TO THAT IS THE LIKELIHOOD THAT NEITHER THE CGT NOR THE CFDT WILL BE SATISFIED WITH THEIR FIRST SLICES OF SALAMI.

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